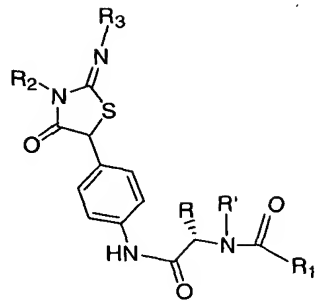
CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A compound of formula I



I

wherein R is C_{1-4} alkyl, optionally substituted with 1-3 halogen atoms, 1-3 oxygen atoms or 1-3 nitrogen atoms, said R having an S stereoconfiguration; R' is H or a bond wherein R and R' are joined to form a cyclic structure;

R_1 is a member selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{6-10} aryl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{6-10} aryloxy, C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkoxy, aryl-substituted C_{1-6} alkyl (C_{6-10}) aryl and Het; and

R_2 and R_3 are each independently selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{6-10} aryl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{6-10} aryloxy, Het, C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkoxy, acyl (C_{1-6}) alkoxy, with the proviso that one of R_2 or R_3 can be a bond and R_2 and R_3 are joined to form a cyclic structure;

or pharmaceutically acceptable enantiomer, diastereomer, solvate, prodrug or salt thereof.

2. The compound according to Claim 1 wherein R is methyl.

3. The compound according to Claim 1 wherein R is selected from propyl

forming a cyclic structure with R', or propionyl forming a cyclic structure with R'.

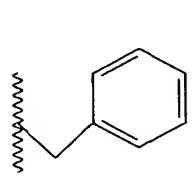
4. The compound according to Claim 1 wherein R_1 is selected from the group consisting of C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkoxy and a 5-7 membered monocylic heterocycle.

5. The compound according to the Claim 4 wherein R_1 is selected from the group consisting of C_6 aryl (C_{1-3}) alkyl and C_6 aryl (C_{1-3}) alkoxy.

6. The compound according to Claim 1 wherein R_2 and R_3 are each independently selected from the group consisting of C_{6-10} aryl, 5-7 membered monocyclic heterocycle, C_{1-3} alkyl substituted with a 5-7 membered heterocycle, C_{6-10} aryl substituted with a 5-7 membered heterocycle, and a 7-12 membered bicyclic heterocycle.

7. The compound according to Claim 6 wherein R_2 and R_3 are each independently selected from a C_{1-3} alkyl substituted with a 5-7 membered heterocycle and a halogenated 5-7 membered heterocycle.

8. The compound according to Claim 1 wherein R_1 is selected from the group consisting of: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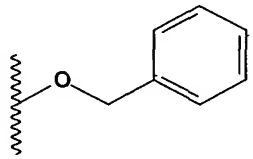
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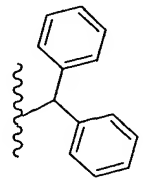
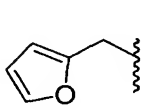


R_2 is selected from the group consisting of: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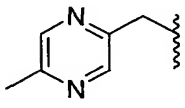
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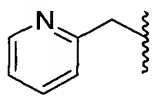
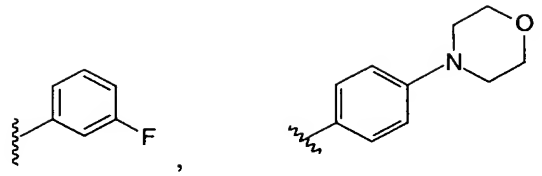
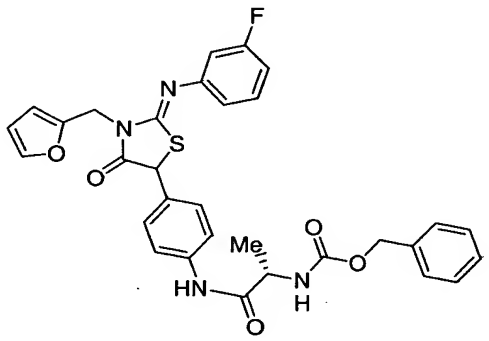

; and

R_3 is selected from the group consisting of:



9. The compound according to Claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:



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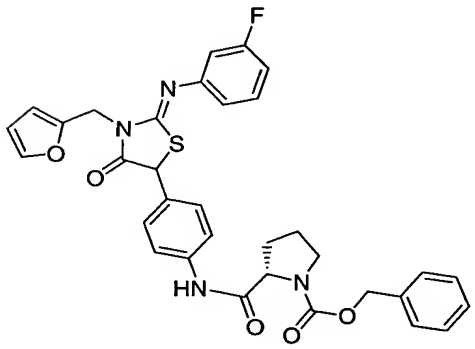

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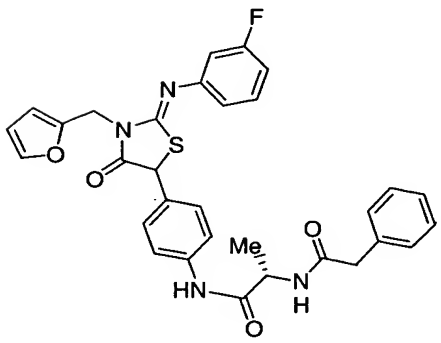

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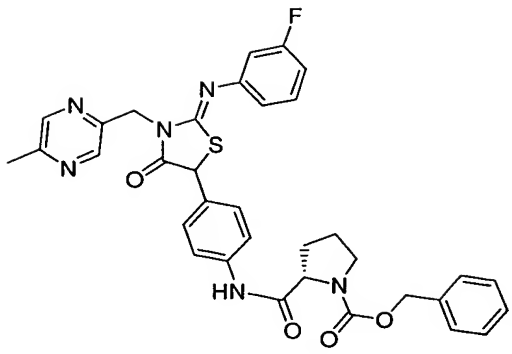

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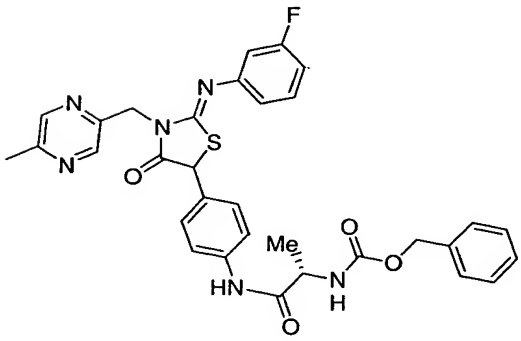

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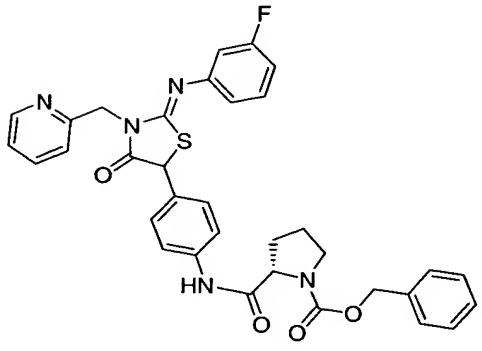

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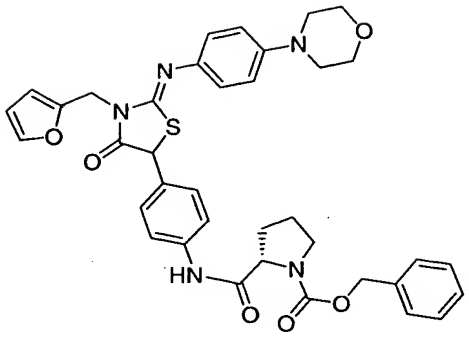

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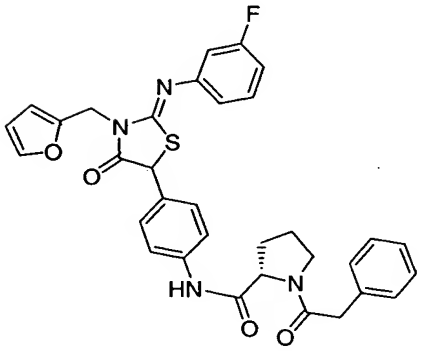

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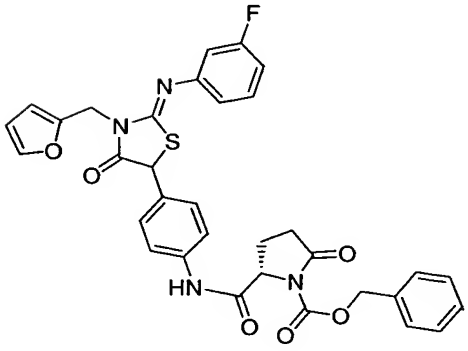
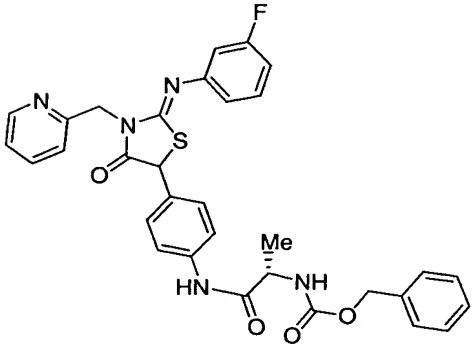


I'



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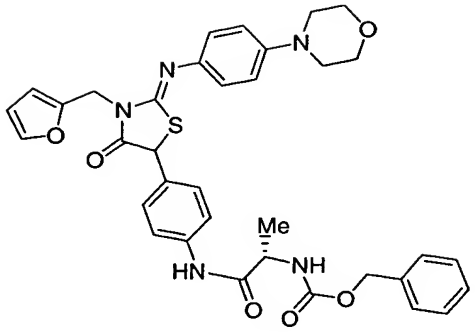

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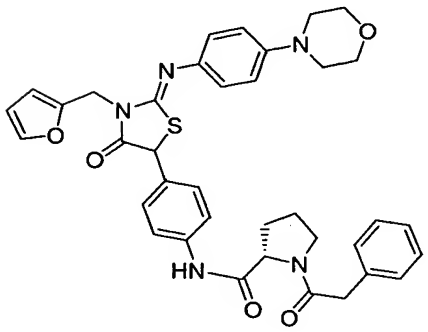

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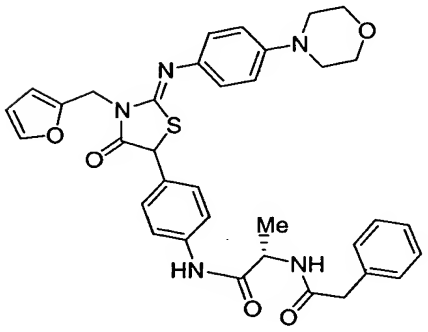
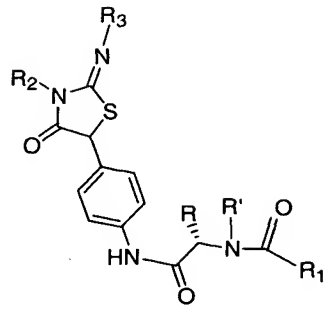


M

or pharmaceutically acceptable enantiamer, distereomer, solvate, prodrug or salt thereof.

10. A compound of formula II



II

wherein R is C_{1-4} alkyl, having an S stereoconfiguration; R' is or a bond wherein R and R' are joined to form a cyclic structure;

R_1 is a member selected from the group consisting of C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl (C_{1-6}) alkoxy and Het; and

R_2 and R_3 are each independently selected from the group consisting of C_{6-10} aryl, 5-7 membered monocyclic heterocycle, C_{1-3} alkyl substituted with a 5-7 membered heterocycle, C_{6-10} aryl substituted with a 5-7 membered heterocycle, and a 7-12 membered bicyclic heterocycle.

or pharmaceutically acceptable enantiomer, diastereomer, solvate, prodrug or salt thereof.

11. The compound according to Claim 10 wherein R is methyl.

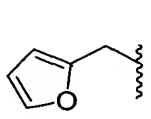
12. The compound according to Claim 11 wherein R is propyl forming a cyclic structure with R'.

13. The compound according to Claim 10 wherein R_1 is selected from the group consisting of C_6 aryl (C_{1-3}) alkyl and C_6 aryl (C_{1-3}) alkoxy.

14. The compound according to Claim 13 wherein R_1 is benzyl.

15. The compound according to Claim 10 wherein R_2 is a 5-6 membered monocyclic heterocycle.

16. The compound according to Claim 15 wherein R_2 is selected from the group consisting of:



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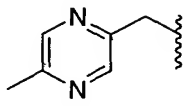
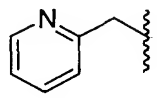


and


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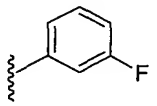
17. The compound according to Claim 10 wherein R_3 is selected from the group consisting of a 5-6 membered monocyclic heterocycle, C_{6-10} aryl substituted with a 5-7 membered heterocycle and a 7-12 membered bicyclic heterocycle.

18. The compound according to Claim 17 wherein R_3 is selected from the group consisting of:



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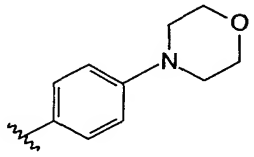

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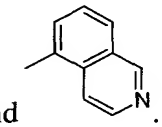

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19. A composition comprising the compound of Claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

20. The composition according to Claim 19 further comprising a compound having anti-HCV activity.

21. The composition according to Claim 20 wherein the compound having anti-HCV activity is an interferon.

22. The composition according to Claim 21 wherein the interferon is selected from the group consisting of interferon alpha 2B, pegylated interferon alpha, consensus interferon, interferon alpha 2A, and lymphoblastiod interferon tau.

23. The composition according to Claim 20 wherein the compound having anti-HCV activity is selected from the group consisting of interleukin 2, interleukin 6, interleukin 12, a compound that enhances the development of a type 1 helper T cell response, interfering RNA, anti-sense RNA, Imiqimod, ribavirin, an inosine 5'-monophospate dehydrogenase inhibitor, amantadine, and rimantadine.

24. The composition according to the Claim 19 further comprising an interferon and ribavirin.

25. The composition according to Claim 20 wherein the compound having anti-HCV activity is a small molecule compound.

26. The composition according to Claim 25 wherein the compound having anti-HCV activity is effective to inhibit the function of a target selected from the group consisting of HCV metalloprotease, HCV serine protease, HCV polymerase, HCV helicase, HCV NS4B protein, HCV entry, HCV assembly, HCV egress, HCV NS5A protein, IMPDH and a nucleoside analog for the treatment of an HCV infection.

27. A method of inhibiting the function of the HCV NS5A protein comprising contacting the HCV NS5A protein with the compound of Claim 1.

28. A method of treating an HCV infection in a patient, comprising administering to the patient a therapeutically effective amount of the compound of Claim 1, or a pharmaceutically acceptable enantiomer, diastereomer, solvate, prodrug or salt thereof.

29. The method according to Claim 28 wherein the compound is effective to inhibit the function of the HCV NS5A protein.

30. The method according to Claim 28 further comprising administering another compound having anti-HCV activity prior to, after or simultaneously with the compound of Claim 1.

31. The method according to Claim 30 wherein the other compound having anti-HCV activity is an interferon.

32. The method according to Claim 30 wherein the interferon is selected from the group consisting of interferon alpha 2B, pegylated interferon alpha, consensus interferon, interferon alpha 2A, lymphoblastiod interferon tau.

33. The method according to Claim 30 wherein the other compound having anti-HCV activity is selected from the group consisting of interleukin 2, interleukin 6, interleukin 12, a compound that enhances the development of a type 1 helper T cell response, interfering RNA, anti-sense RNA, Imiqimod, ribavirin, an inosine 5'-monophospate dehydrogenase inhibitor, amantadine, and rimantadine.

34. The method according to Claim 30 wherein the compound having anti-HCV activity is a small molecule.

35. The method according to Claim 34 wherein the compound having anti-HCV activity is effective to inhibit the function of a target selected from the group consisting of HCV metalloprotease, HCV serine protease, HCV polymerase, HCV helicase, HCV NS4B protein, HCV entry, HCV assembly, HCV egress, HCV NS5A protein, IMPDH and a nucleoside analog for the treatment of an HCV infection.

36. The method according to Claim 34 wherein the other compound having anti-HCV activity is effective to inhibit the function of target in the HCV life cycle other than the HCV NS5A protein.

37. Use of the compound of Claim 1 for the manufacture of a medicament for treating HCV infection in a patient.

38. Use of the composition of Claim 19 for the manufacture of a medicament for treating HCV infection in a patient.